

Auditor-General of South Africa

uMlalazi Municipality - Audit report 2016-17

Report of the auditor-general to the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature and the council on the uMlalazi Municipality

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

1. I have audited the financial statements of the uMlalazi Municipality set out on pages ... to ..., which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, statement of financial performance, statement of changes in net assets, cash flow statement and statement of comparison of budget with actual information for the year then ended, as well as the notes to the financial statements, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies.
2. In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the uMlalazi Municipality as at 30 June 2017, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the South African Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (SA Standards of GRAP) and the requirements of the Municipal Finance Management Act of South Africa, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) (MFMA) and the Division of Revenue Act of South Africa, 2016 (Act No. 3 of 2016) (DoRA).

Basis for opinion

3. I conducted my audit in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor-general's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this report.
4. I am independent of the municipality in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' *Code of ethics for professional accountants* (IESBA code) and the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit in South Africa. I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA code.
5. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of matter

6. I draw attention to the matter below. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Material losses – electricity

7. As disclosed in note 54 to the financial statements, material electricity losses of R8,59 million (2015-2016: R6,92 million) were incurred, which represents 11.8% (2015-2016: 10%) of total electricity purchased. Technical losses were due to street light consumptions being unmetered, tampering with electricity installations and other technical losses.

Other matter

8. I draw attention to the matter below. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Unaudited disclosure notes

9. In terms of section 125(2)(e) of the MFMA the municipality is required to disclose particulars of non-compliance with the MFMA in the financial statements. This disclosure requirement did not form part of the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, I do not express an opinion thereon.

Unaudited supplementary schedules

10. The supplementary information set out on pages 56 to 61 does not form part of the financial statements and is presented as additional information. I have not audited these schedules and, accordingly, I do not express an opinion thereon.

Responsibilities of the accounting officer for the financial statements

11. The accounting officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the SA Standards of GRAP and the requirements of the MFMA, DoRA and for such internal control as the accounting officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

12. In preparing the financial statements, the accounting officer is responsible for assessing the municipality's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the intention is to liquidate the municipality or cease operations, or there is no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor-general's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

13. My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

14. A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is included in the annexure to this auditor's report.

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

Introduction and scope

15. In accordance with the Public Audit Act of South Africa, 2004 (Act No. 25 of 2004) (PAA) and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I have a responsibility to report material findings on the reported performance information against predetermined objectives for selected development priority presented in the annual performance report. I performed procedures to identify findings but not to gather evidence to express assurance.

16. My procedures address the reported performance information, which must be based on the approved performance planning documents of the municipality. I have not evaluated the completeness and appropriateness of the performance indicators included in the planning documents. My procedures also did not extend to any disclosures or assertions relating to planned performance strategies and information in respect of future periods that may be included as part of the reported performance information. Accordingly, my findings do not extend to these matters.
17. I evaluated the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information in accordance with the criteria developed from the performance management and reporting framework, as defined in the general notice for development priority 2 – basic service delivery and infrastructure development on pages ... to ..., presented in the annual performance report of the municipality for the year ended 30 June 2017.
18. I performed procedures to determine whether the reported performance information was consistent with the approved performance planning documents. I performed further procedures to determine whether the indicators and related targets were measurable and relevant, and assessed the reliability of the reported performance information to determine whether it was valid, accurate and complete.
19. I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the performance information for the selected development priority.

Other matters

20. I draw attention to the matters below.

Achievement of planned targets

21. The annual performance report on pages ... to ... includes information on the achievement of planned targets for the year and explanations are provided for the under/overachievement of a number of targets.

Adjustment of material misstatements

22. I identified material misstatements in the annual performance report submitted for auditing. These material misstatements were on the reported performance information of development priority 2 – basic service delivery and infrastructure development. As management subsequently corrected the misstatements, I did not raise any material findings on the usefulness and reliability of the reported performance information.

Report on the audit of compliance with legislation

Introduction and scope

23. In accordance with the PAA and the general notice issued in terms thereof, I have a responsibility to report material findings on the compliance of the municipality with specific matters in key legislation. I performed procedures to identify findings but not to gather evidence to express assurance.
24. The material findings on compliance with specific matters in key legislation are as follows:

Annual financial statements

25. The financial statements submitted for auditing were not prepared in all material respects in accordance with the requirements of section 122 of the MFMA. Material misstatements of section 36 deviations and irregular expenditure for 2015/16 financial year was identified by the auditors and were subsequently corrected, resulting in the financial statements receiving an unqualified opinion.

Expenditure management

26. Reasonable steps were not taken to prevent irregular expenditure and fruitless and wasteful expenditure, as required by section 62(1)(d) of the MFMA.

Other information

27. The accounting officer is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, which includes the mayor's foreword, municipal manager's foreword and audit committee's report. The other information does not include the financial statements, the auditor's report and the selected development priorities presented in the annual performance report that have been specifically reported in the auditor's report.

28. My opinion on the financial statements and findings on the reported performance information and compliance with legislation do not cover the other information and I do not express an audit opinion or any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

29. In connection with my audit, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements and the selected development priority presented in the annual performance report, or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; I am required to report that fact.

30. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Internal control deficiencies

31. I considered internal control relevant to my audit of the financial statements, reported performance information and compliance with applicable legislation; however, my objective was not to express any form of assurance thereon.

32. The matters reported below are limited to the significant internal control deficiencies that resulted in the basis for the findings on compliance with legislation included in this report.

Leadership

33. The accounting officer did not exercise adequate oversight over financial reporting and compliance as material misstatements in the annual financial statements were identified and subsequently corrected, which resulted in the municipality receiving an unqualified audit opinion.

Financial and performance management

34. Management did not adequately review and monitor compliance with legislation regarding the supply chain management processes and the preparation of the financial statements.

Auditor-General

Pietermaritzburg

30 November 2017



Auditing to build public confidence

Annexure – auditor-general's responsibility for the audit

1. As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout my audit of the financial statements, and the procedures performed on reported performance information for selected development priority and on the municipality's compliance with respect to the selected subject matters.

Financial statements

2. In addition to my responsibility for the audit of the financial statements as described in the auditor's report, I also:
 - identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control
 - obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the municipality's internal control
 - evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the accounting officer.
 - conclude on the appropriateness of the accounting officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements. I also conclude, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the uMlalazi Municipality's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements about the material uncertainty or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the opinion on the financial statements. My conclusions are based on the information available to me at the date of the auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause a municipality to cease continuing as a going concern
 - evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation
 - obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the group to express an opinion on the financial statements. I am responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the audit. I remain solely responsible for my audit opinion.

Communication with those charged with governance

3. I communicate with the accounting officer regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.
4. I also confirm to the accounting officer that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and communicate all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to have a bearing on my independence and, where applicable, related safeguards.